

ABSTRACT

**MODULAR BACKUP AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM
USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A STORAGE AREA NETWORK**

A modular computer storage system and method is provided for managing and directing data archiving functions, which is scaleable and comprehends various storage media as well as diverse operating systems on a plurality of client devices. A client component is associated with one or more client devices for generating archival request. A file processor directs one or more storage devices, through one or more media components, which control the actual physical level backup on various storage devices. Each media component creates a library indexing system for locating stored data. A management component coordinates the archival functions between the various client components and the file processor, including setting scheduling policies, aging policies, index pruning policies, drive cleaning policies, configuration information, and keeping track of running and waiting jobs. The management component also keeps the scheduling information for a timetable of backups of the client devices and allocates storage space. The modular computer storage system may also work in conjunction with a Storage Area Network (SAN) to provide for the computing devices both file storage and backup functions through a network, such as a Local Area Network (LAN). Computing devices may be different types of machines running different operating systems and the backup media may also be diverse. The SAN acts as a virtual media device for centralizing a network file system for the computing devices providing for shared data as well as transparent storage for each computing device.